

Queen's Park Football Club and the Great War 1914-1918



This account aims to raise awareness and understanding in both the club and wider community of the impact of the war on the club and the 220 + members and players who enlisted for military service, at least 32 of whom died. Their story has remained virtually unknown until now.

Part Two Queen's Park Counts the Cost

Gallipoli and The Eastern Mediterranean

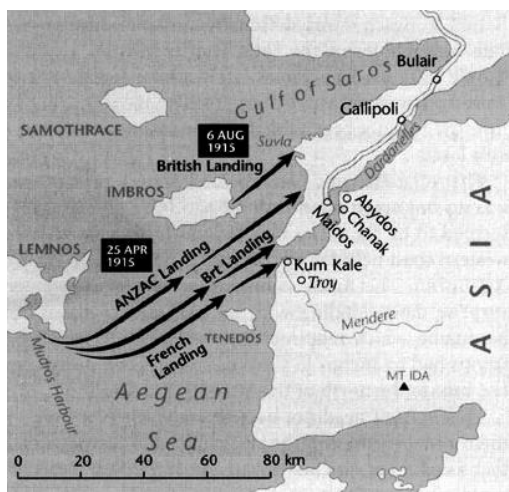


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Queen's Park Counts the Cost

Gallipoli and the Eastern Mediterranean

The Gallipoli Campaign of 1915, also known as the Dardanelles Campaign, was an attempt by the Allied Powers to control the sea route from Europe to Russia by attacking and defeating Germany's ally, Turkey.



The campaign began with a failed naval attack by British and French ships on the Dardanelles Straits and continued with a major land invasion of the Gallipoli Peninsula on April 25th 1915, involving British and French troops as well as divisions of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.

The landings were quickly contained by Turkish forces, and trench warfare then took hold at Gallipoli, mirroring the fighting of the Western Front. In the hot summer conditions, food quickly became inedible and illness and disease rampant.



On August 6th 1915 there were fresh landings at Suvla Bay to the North of the original landing positions, as part of a final allied attempt to break the deadlock on the peninsula.

Evacuation of the Gallipoli peninsula began in December and was completed on January 7th 1916 - the best planned and executed element of what had been a disastrous campaign costing the lives of around 60,000 allied soldiers.

Three Queen's Park members and players fought in the Gallipoli campaign – Robert Lusk, Andrew McCrae and Tom Haydock.

Robert Lusk at Gallipoli

Robert Lusk was born in Partick in 1887, one of the five children of William and Mary Lusk. William Lusk, Managing Director of the Mitchell Brothers Whisky Distillery Company, lived with his family at “Rosebank” on the shores of the Clyde at Langbank. An accountant by profession, Robert Lusk played for Queen’s Park in his youth, although not for the first XI.

Bob Lusk emigrated to New Zealand in January 1911, followed the following year by the rest of his family. He was sheep farming on the Dalmeny Park homestead, at Hawarden 50 miles (80 km) North of Christchurch before enlisting with the Canterbury Mounted Rifle Regiment on the outbreak of war. The regiment trained in Egypt prior to landing at Anzac Cove on May 12th 1915. Their main involvement in the campaign was to come as part of the final allied attempt to break the deadlock on the peninsula in August.



At 9.00 pm on August 6th, coinciding with the fresh landings 5 miles (8 km) further North at Suvla Bay, the Canterbury Regiment took part in the assault on the Sari Bair ridge at Anzac Cove. To reduce noise they were ordered to use only bayonets. With two hundred yards (180 metres) still to go, a destroyer's searchlight beam lit up the advancing men, and a Turkish machine-gun opened fire. Without firing a shot the Canterbury men manoeuvred around and overcame the machine-gun post from the rear.

One of those killed was Robert Lusk. His section sergeant described how “we found Bob Lusk the next morning, dead, with his wire cutters in his hand right at the muzzle of the gun which, of course, was taken, and a good few Turks were lying bayoneted here”.

By the time the Canterbury men reached their final objective, Beauchop Hill, on the morning of August 7th they had sustained 40 % casualties.

Trooper Robert Lusk is buried at 7th Field Ambulance Cemetery on the Gallipoli peninsula.



Andrew McCrae at Gallipoli

Andrew Bowie McCrae was born in Dundee in 1887, one of four sons of John and Jeanie McCrae. He was educated at Dundee High School. The family moved to "Rosemount" in Crail, Fife, and Andrew McCrae gained an MA at St Andrew's University. Thereafter he studied law at Dundee University, whilst living at Ellengowan Lodge, Arbroath Road, Dundee, in the home of his elder brother, Boyd, and sister in law, Sophie.



After qualifying Andrew McCrae worked for Gair & Gibson, solicitors, in Falkirk. He won the Scottish Cup as an amateur with Falkirk in 1913 and was also an active golfer.



He joined Queen's Park from Falkirk at the start of season 1913 - 1914 and made 15 appearances at outside right.

In June 1914 he went on the club's tour of Denmark and Sweden, scoring in the 2-0 win against Orgryte in Gothenburg on June 3rd.

On board ship Andrew McCrae is on the left at the front.

Andrew McCrae was a Corporal with the Lovat Scouts, 2nd Battalion. The Lovat Scouts had originally been formed as a reservist cavalry unit of the British army. On September 26th 1915 the battalion landed at Gallipoli as part of the Highland Mounted Brigade of the 2nd Mounted Division.

In November the oppressive summer conditions gave way to deluges of rain and snow blizzards. Corporal Andrew McCrae died, aged 28, of wounds sustained at Suvla Bay, Gallipoli on November 17th 1915. He is buried in Lala Baba Cemetery and commemorated on memorials in Crail and Eilan Donan, as well as the 3 institutions at which he was educated.



Tom Haydock in the Middle East and on the Western Front

Tom Haydock was born in Dalmarnock in 1890, the son of Joseph and Sarah Haydock. His father was the manager of a cotton-spinning mill in Bridgeton and he lived at River Bank, River Street, Dalmarnock. He was a graduate of Glasgow University and a salesman with the Clydevale Oil and Colour Company, Bridgeton.

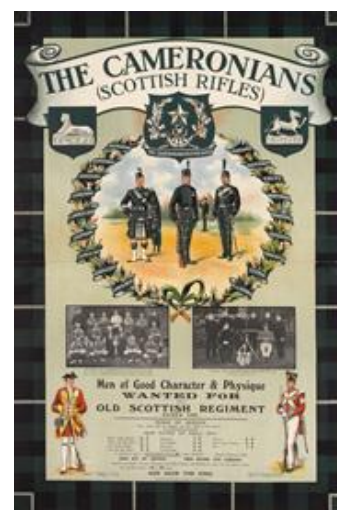


Tom Haydock made his first team debut at centre half against Raith Rovers on April 25th 1914. He went on to make 29 appearances for the club, scoring three times. Like Andrew McCrae he went on Queen's Park's tour of Denmark and Sweden in June 1914. He is seen here in the centre of the photo.

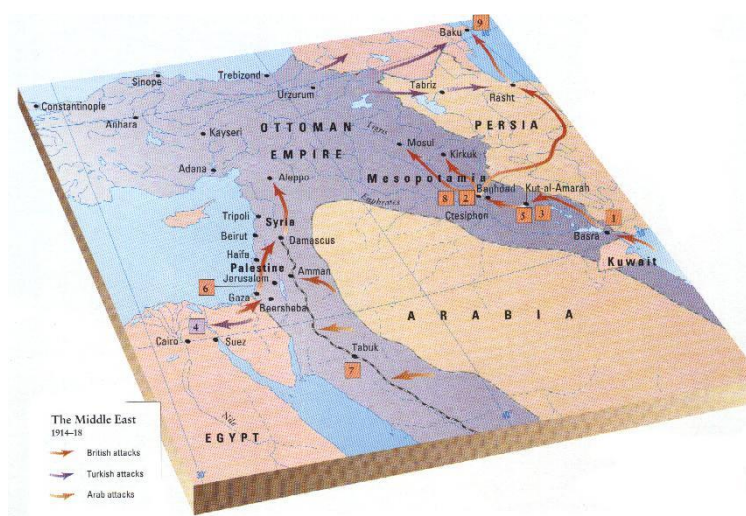
Tom Haydock initially enlisted in September 1914 as a Private in the 5th Battalion Cameron Highlanders, continuing to appear for Queen's Park whilst in training.

In January 1915 he was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant into the 7th Battalion Scottish Rifles (Cameronians) Regiment, again continuing to appear for the club until October.

Following his last appearance against Hamilton Academical on October 23rd 1915, Tom Haydock sailed for the Middle East to join the 7th Battalion.



The 7th Battalion had enlisted recruits at their HQ in Victoria Road, Glasgow. As part of 156th Brigade of the 52nd (Lowland) Division it had landed at Cape Helles on the Gallipoli peninsula on June 14th 1915, and been engaged in many of the major battles on the peninsula in June and July.



Following evacuation from Gallipoli in January 1916 the 52nd Division moved to Egypt which was the base for British attacks on the Ottoman Empire (Turkey) through Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Palestine.

In March 1916 the 52nd Division took over a section of the Suez Canal defences before becoming heavily involved in the British campaign in Palestine throughout much of 1916 and 1917.

At 11 pm on November 1st, under cover of an intense ten-minute bombardment, the 7th Battalion, Scottish Rifles, with one company of the 8th Battalion, attacked Umbrella Hill, a sand dune just over a mile South-West of Gaza.



Although they quickly captured the hill, it was difficult to defend and the ensuing Turkish bombardment resulted in 103 casualties to the 7th Battalion over the next twenty-four hours. Tom Haydock was one of those seriously wounded during this engagement, to the extent that he was unable to re-join his battalion until August 1918. During his period of convalescence he became engaged to a Miss Moore of Carmyle.

On April 17th 1918 the 52nd Division landed in France. On July 31st it took over the front line trenches to the North East of Arras, at a time when the major German Spring Offensive had stalled and the Allies were preparing for the massive “Hundred Days” counter – attacks which would finally end the war.



On August 21st the 52nd Division attacked the “Hindenburg Line” of German defences 5.5 miles (9 kilometres) South East of Arras and continued to fight its way South East down that section of the line to Bullecourt and beyond.

On September 1st the 7th Battalion, Scottish Rifles, was ordered to attack the Hindenburg Line to the West of the village of Queant. The battalion diary records the subsequent events

September 2nd 1918

8.10 am Battalion moved out to jumping off position.

8.45 am Barrage came down which was both weak and inaccurate, "C" Coy (Company) suffering several casualties from it.

9.40 am "B" and "C" Coys held up by wire in front of Hindenburg line which had been untouched by barrage. "C" Coy succeeded in entering Hindenburg Line and accounted for 13 Germans before being compelled to withdraw on arrival of enemy reinforcements.

10.30 am Position maintained in front of wire for 5 and a half hours in spite of heavy M.G. fire. Several attempts were made during this time to effect an entry into trench but without success. All communications between Coys and Battalion HQ by runners who had to cross the open, invariably under heavy fire.

3.30 pm Hostile M.G. fire decreased and scouts reported Hindenburg Line evacuated.

"B" and "C" Coys pushed forward and occupied trenches. Battalion immediately advanced to final objective, again under heavy M.G. fire from Queant.

9.30 pm M.G. in Queant ceased and patrols, pushing forward, reported the town evacuated.

September 3rd 1918

8.30 am Casualties during these operations were 7 officers wounded; Other Ranks killed 11, wounded 54. Captures included 7 M.G.s and 3 Trench Mortars. In the afternoon the Brigade was visited by Mr Harry Lauder.

Lieutenant Tom Haydock was one of those wounded on September 2nd. Later that day, at the age of 28, he died from his wounds.

On September 13th 1918 the Southern Press reported "Queen's Park players wore black bands on their arms to show respect for the late Lieut. Tom Haydock, who died from wounds received in action. Tom was a regular playing member in the Hampden club, and was most popular with all followers of the game".

Tom Haydock is buried in Bac-du-Sud British Cemetery in Bailleulval, France. Bailleulval, 13 km South West of Arras, was the location of several Casualty Clearing Stations in 1918.



John Wilkinson on the Salonika Front

The First World War was fought wherever the Allies and Central Powers had common borders. It was fought in China and Africa where the European powers had colonies. It was also fought along Russia's borders with Germany, Turkey and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It was fought along the border between Italy and the Austro-Hungarian Empire and in the Balkans, where British and French troops fought alongside Greeks on a front stretching West from Salonika to Tirana.



In this theatre of war dysentery and malaria were rife, as was a level of barbarity and atrocity born out of decades of animosity between the peoples of the Balkans.

John Wilkinson was born in 1886, a son of John and Annie Wilkinson. The family lived at 65 Gardner Street, Partick. Before the war John Wilkinson was a coal salesman living at 68 Lauderdale Gardens, Hyndland. He was a member of Queen's Park and had made 4 appearances keeping goal for the club in 1908.



2nd Lieutenant John Wilkinson had enlisted in the 4th Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders but was soon transferred to the 12th Battalion. The 12th Battalion was part of the 77th Brigade, 26th Division. In November 1915 the Division left for Salonika where it remained for the rest of the war.

On September 18th 1918 the 26th Division attacked Bulgarian forces around Lake Doiran on the Macedonian border to the North West of Salonika. The 77th Brigade took some Bulgarian frontline trenches but it was in a position exposed to artillery bombardment and machine gun fire from enemy defensive positions on "Pip Ridge".

One eye witness described the involvement of the 12th Battalion Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders :

"It was now the turn of the Scotsmen - Fusiliers, Rifles and Highlanders of the 77th Brigade, undismayed by the dreadful evidence of havoc, ran forward among the Welsh and Bulgarian dead. Fighting on into a maze of enemy entanglements, the Scotsmen were being annihilated, their flanks withering under a terrible enfilade.
We gained only the unimportant ruins of Doiran Town and a cluster of small hills immediately above it, never of any value to the enemy or strongly defended. The fortress of Grand Couronne was unshaken, with crumpled bodies of men and a litter of awful wreckage below it. the Royal Scots Fusiliers lost 358, the Argylls 299 and the Scottish Rifles 228 men".

The Brigade was forced to retreat on September 19th, having sustained about 50% casualties.

Amongst those killed, at the age of 32, was 2nd Lieutenant John Wilkinson. He is buried in Doiran Military Cemetery.

